***The American Revolution
RO165-02***

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Please turn to Romans 13:1-7. Our subject is "The Christian and the State," and this is segment number four.

**Human Government**

It is no secret that people have an inherent propensity to do evil, and therefore people have to be restrained from doing the evil that comes to them so naturally. God has therefore provided the institution of human government to restrain human evil, and to encourage the performance of good works. Human government is authorized, therefore, to take the lives of evildoers for certain specified crimes, and to impose lesser punishments for other crimes. The purpose of all this is to enforce orderliness and safety in the society for the protection of life and property. That is the primary and fundamental reason for human government. That's why God put it together. That's why God made it a divine institution that applies to all the human race. That is the only business that government has. Any government that steps outside of the confines of protecting the lives and the property of the people from internal and external threat is a government that is no longer operating under the divine institution of human government, and has gone astray from the purpose of God. Any government that ever goes astray, to any degree, from God's purpose in this divine institution, to that extent, becomes a tyrannical institution. Punishment by civil authorities, then, is designed to create fear in the evildoer, and to restrain the evildoer, either by imprisonment or death.

God's institution of government is to be respected and obeyed by Christians, for the simple fact that it is the will of God. Government is guided by the biblical laws of establishment. Governments which ignore or violate the laws of the establishment become tyrannical.

**Divine Laws of Government**

We have looked at these divine laws for the establishment of government. They include the protection of citizens internally through a police power. Secondly is the protection of the nation externally, through a military power. Third, there is a structure of government which is subject to the will of the governed. And when we say these divine laws for the establishment of a government, this comes out of the Bible. This is what the Bible presents as the factors that constitute legitimate government. Fourth, the Bible says that a government must be a free enterprise economic system based on the possession of private property ownership. Fifth, the divine laws of establishment for government require a system of properly constituted laws which are fairly enforced. And sixth, the government must promote a national culture which unifies the people. That national culture includes a variety of things: the language; the attitude toward God; the attitude toward the Bible; and, so on, that constitutes a common ground of culture that the people share.

The divine institution of government is designed to maintain God's order of independent sovereign nations instead of a world government. Satan, from the very first, recognized that if he could control all the people of the world under a unified world government, he would have it made relative to evil. This has been demonstrated anywhere that Satan has come into power, such as in communist countries, where access to the Word of God is completely cut off. And the more countries communism controls, the wider is the restriction on access to the Word of God.

In Russia, the churches are permitted only to do what the government does not want to do, or cannot do. If churches assist people who are in financial need, or churches run their own fellowship, help, welfare program, that church will be shut down; that preacher will be put in jail; and that people will be punished. It is illegal in Russia for a church group to assist other people in their material needs. That is a province which is reserved only to the God of the state. The only thing, therefore, in Russia the churches can do is for people to gather, and sit in seats, and meditate, and think about God, because the state is not interested in promoting meditation and thoughts about God – a God that they don't believe even exists.

So, the divine institution of government includes nationalism – nations as special entities. Once internationalism comes in (and that is the goal of communism – a world international union), then access to God's Word is lost.

**Nimrod**

This attack on nationalism began early on in the history of the human race, and we ought to look at it once more. It began with a rebellion led by a man named Nimrod. Nimrod was one of those charismatic people who was characterized as being a great hunter. And the Bible implies that he was a great killer. He was a person that was one of the original mafia types. Therefore, he could pull powers together, and could control people in a fantastic way. Tradition tells us that Nimrod, though he lived five generations from the flood, still lived while Shem, one of the sons of Noah, was still alive. And tradition tells us that Shem finally killed Nimrod and brought to a halt temporarily Nimrod's promotion of humanism, a false religion against God to substitute the true knowledge of God.

In Genesis 10:8-10, this man is described for us. We're told that Cush begot Nimrod, and he became a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter, which implies that he was also a killer before the Lord: "Wherefore, it is said, even as Nimrod, the mighty hunter, before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."

**Babylon**

So, Nimrod is the man who began the civilization, which later came to be known as Babylon on the plain of Shinar. Nimrod decided that he would lead the people in their first attempt at internationalism, in violation of God's plan of nationalism. God had told Noah and his sons and their wives, as mankind began to multiply and to re-inhabit the newly cleansed earth, that they were gradually to move out and to fill the earth. Five generations have now gone by, and nobody has moved away. They have all stuck together on the plain of Shinar, and they are beginning to get very uncomfortable because of Gods directive to them. So, under Nimrod's leadership, they decide to make a move that they think will so anchor them together, and will so solidify the human race, that God will not be able to break them up into individual nations.

That, of course, flew in the face of the very purpose and plan of God. The reason I stress this to you is because I am amazed how many Christians, who should know better, actually do not believe that the Bible teaches that human beings should exist as national entities upon the face of the earth. They actually believe that there is a virtue and a value in internationalism. They do not really believe that internationalism is a destruction of the human race. And I have had college students tell me that when they have brought up the fact that the Tower of Babel was an attempt at international unity, and was in effect a United Nation type of operation, the whole class burst out laughing. And this is sometimes even in Christian colleges where they ought to know better. So, I stress to you that it is the will of God to have nations as separate entities on the face of the earth in order to prevent Satan from being able to snuff out the Word of God with one unified blow.

Deuteronomy 32:8 says, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance; when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." When God put gentiles into national entities, He did this in part in relationship to His purposes for the nation of Israel, which was His chief nation. But they were all divided into boundaries geographically.

The New Testament, in Acts 17:26, confirms this same fact. Paul says, "And has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." God has determined national boundaries.

Now Nimrod comes along, and he knows about the divine institution of human government, because it has been passed on down from Noah. And he decides to use it against God instead of using it in obedience to God. He decides to use this divine institution to act as a political leader; to rally people together; and, to move them away from God, and in direct violation of the will of God. Political leaders who do not understand the divine institution of government, which requires that they be students of the Word of God so that they can exercise legal authority, are still trying to lead people away from God, and in conflict with the principles of Scripture.

We have this in Genesis 11:1-9, where we read, "And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the East, that they found the plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there (the descendants of the flood). And they said one to another, 'Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly.' And they had brick for stone, and they had slime for mortar. And they said, 'Come, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach into the heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

Nimrod was the first of a line of evil rulers who come down to the present day who abuse civil authority. What Nimrod planned to do was to defy the plan of God of nationalism. And he led the people in this project of building a great city which became Babylon, and building at the center of it a tower, and at the top of the tower would be a religious edifice for worship of the sun; the moon; and, the stars. They were building a ziggurat type of pyramid. that is not one where the side were smooth, but one where the sides came down in stair step arrangements from top to bottom, sort of like a Christmas tree. And at the top was a flat place where they would build the temple.

You can go down to some place down in Mexico, such as the Chichen Itza, and you can see where the Mayans built exactly that kind of a ziggurat stair-step pyramid. And they had the worship at the top. And it was indeed the worship of their God who was in the form of a snake, showing the connection back to Satan himself.

**Humanism**

So, they were smart enough to know that man is a religious creature. You knew that there was no way he was going to bring people together unless they had a religion around which they could rally, by which they would make a set of determination of what's right, what's wrong, and what they were going to do. The religion he was promoting, of course, is the religion we still have today, and we call it humanism, where man becomes the center of everything, or man becomes his own god.

**The Mystery Religion of Babylon**

So, they were going to defy God, but that's a losing game because God was easily able to frustrate these rebels. But Nimrod founded his kingdom, the kingdom of Babylon, on the plain of Shinar. And, as you know, Babylon was the fountainhead of all false religion. This religion of humanism was a basic source of all false religion that has come down through the history of mankind. This false religion had its secrets called "mysteries," that were only given to insiders. Thus we call it "the mystery religion of Babylon."

**The Roman Catholic Church**

This religion of Babylon was finally fused with biblical Christianity in the year 325 A.D. by the Roman Emperor Constantine. That fusion of Babylonian paganism and biblical Christianity became what is known today as the religious perversion of the Roman Catholic Church. Because it is a fusion of paganism with biblical Christianity, you find a great deal in the Roman Catholic Church, in his beliefs and practices, that makes absolutely no sense at all if you try to match it up to the Bible, because it isn't in the Bible. It doesn't come from the Bible. It comes outside of Scripture.

This system, however, will continue to evolve, and eventually it will become the world church of the antichrist in the tribulation. It will be such a loathsome thing spiritually that God calls it, in the book of the Revelation, the harlot (the prostitute) church – prostitute in terms of spiritual adultery. The Lord Jesus Christ himself, when He returns, will destroy this world church which was begun way back there by Nimrod in Babylon. You can read about that in Revelation 17.

People were so lacking in Bible doctrine, five generations from Noah, that they were easily led into Nimrod's scheme, promoted by Satan for worldwide unity. So, they said, "Let's get together. We'll make ourselves a city. We'll anchor it to this central tower, which will be our point of rallying. And we will see it. We will not get too far off. We'll spread out here in the countryside. We can still see our tower way up there, up into the sky, with our temple at the top. That will be our unity." This was based, of course, on glorifying man instead of God. They actually believed that God was wrong in telling them to scatter out over the earth. I want you to understand that. What Nimrod was saying is: "God has told us that. Nobody could deny that." They all knew that: "But God should not have told us that. God is wrong.

**Abortion**

This is similar to political leaders who today will say, "God has told us that every life is given by Him. There is no conception that is not an act of God. And that conception has resulted in something in the very image of God Himself: a human being. For that reason, an unborn baby cannot be slaughtered without committing murder." Politicians say, "No, that's wrong. God made a very terrible mistake. He doesn't know what He's talking about. It's OK to abort the fetus. It is OK to abort an unborn child. If Mary decided that she should have control over her own body, and indeed her own body there was well beyond the control of Mary, the mother of Jesus, because at least Mary was not involved with sexual relations, at which point she could control her body, that she could have determined whether that child was going to be born. But Mary didn't for one moment say, "Well, I'm going to abort this child. This is going to be embarrassing in the community. I'm not married and everybody knows it. I'm just not going to do this.

Because politicians today are in the system of the divine institution of government, but detached from Scripture, they're fools. And therefore, they can stand up and say, "God, you're wrong. You don't know what you're talking about. It is OK to kill an unborn child."

**Capital Punishment**

It is the political leaders today, who have Nimrod's spirit of rebellion and contempt for the Word of God and for the God who is out there, who will say that capital punishment is wrong, and they are opposed to it. And they'll give you all the horror stories of the person who has been misrepresented here and there, and who has innocently been condemned, which is really very hard to do if you follow the biblical requirement of eyewitness, confirmatory, neutral evidence, in the case of murder-one.

**Politicians**

Yet, these men stand up and say, "Hey, I want you to give me the reins of authority, so I can drive this ship of state, even though I think that that jerk up there called God is telling us that capital punishment is His way of keeping the world from becoming a jungle way, the way it was before the flood. He doesn't know what he's talking about. Just listen to me, folks. Here we go." Now you have to be totally calloused to anything that the Bible says, and to the authority of the Scripture, to even listen to a politician like that, and to give him a second look. He is a dangerous creature, and should not be made part of the divine institution of government. And a nation which is willing to do that will itself suffer the consequences.

The people in Nimrod's day did not know the Word of God. He stuck the hook in their nose, and like a bunch of pigs, he easily led them around to do what he chose to do with them. Nimrod believed that internal union would be to the best interests of the people. He was wrong. He wanted therefore to create a visible rallying point, which he did in this pyramid tower. He felt that they could become so powerful that they were united that God couldn't do anything to scatter them. I mean, this is how dumb you become when you lose the guidance of doctrine. They actually believed (that's why they were doing this) that if they built this tower, and they had this huge rallying point that was the center of the religious life, there's no way that God was going to break them up into smaller groups. All of this was within five generations of a splendid man like Noah. How soon our children forget. How soon our grandchildren go astray. How soon the great grandchildren are back to paganism, unless the chain is kept intact with intensity of introduction and teaching in the Word of God form earliest childhood.

Well, all of this was a clear violation of the divine institution of human government, and it was abuse of authority under God.

Now comes God the picture, in Genesis 11:5: "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men were building." Now here, of course, we have anthropomorphism. This is God being described as if He were just an ordinary human being, acting with limitations. This is God being described so we can relate ourselves to what he's doing. God, of course, didn't have to come down to see what they were doing or to interpret it. All of this was very clear. But He came down to see what they're doing.

"And the Lord said, 'Behold, the people are one." Do you see that? That's the problem. Internationalism; a social unity; a political unity; the people are one; and, they have all one language. And the reason the people are one is because they all know how to speak the same language. They all meet with each other. You do not meet and associate with people whose language you cannot speak. You don't have a common ground to go very far: "And this they began to do." And the Trinity looked at the tower; They looked at the city they were building; and, the Trinity walked into the engineer's office and They looked at the big chart they had on the wall showing the plan for the city – this grandiose structure. All of this was as if God were a human being; walking around; and, examining this site.

"And now, the consequence of this is that nothing will be withheld from them which they have imagined to do. That was the problem. God says, "If we let this go on, this internationalism will completely stifle the access to the Word of God, and they will be withheld from no evil that they can imagine, which was what happened on the other side of the flood. There was no restraint on the other side. Therefore, like the Bible says, "Every thought of their imaginations was continually evil," and the result was that violence and that jungle in society."

So, says, "It's going to happen all over again. And it's because they have nothing to separate them, and Nimrod is bringing them together. They are under his influence." So, God makes a decision. The Trinity decided to break up the international arrangement, and the way they did it was very simple. They mixed them up in their languages.

**God Confounded their Languages**

"Come, let Us go down, and there confound their language:" "Let Us (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) go down and mix up their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." And They did. Well, boy, can you imagine when they came on (the morning shift came to work), and all of a sudden, boy these different languages were flying all around: "Who's saying what? Bring me more bricks." The reply was, "I don't know what you're saying. Give me more bricks. I don't. . . . What are you talking about? You're being funny. Ah, come on. What do you need?" It was a mess.

Finally, the whole project came to a screeching halt because nobody in sufficient numbers was able to understand one another. I don't know how many languages there were. Wouldn't it have been terrible if everybody only spoke their own one language, and your wife spoke a different language? What a mess that would have been. But there were a lot of different languages all of a sudden, and there was no way that they could coordinate this operation. I mean you can just point, and show emotions just so much to get something done. And after a while, you have to have words to communicate.

So, the result was exactly what God planned. Panic ensued. They could no longer understand each other. Therefore, they could not cooperate with each other. And what they did next was very logical. They began listening and picking up here somebody they understood. And gradually, they formed into groups of people who did speak the same language, so that they found people at least to whom they could communicate and discuss this amazing development.

The result was that, gradually, there was no purpose in them hanging around with people they couldn't understand. So, language groups then floated out and began forming national groups. God brought it about the hard way when they would not do it the easy way. And I suspect that, in the course of all this, God also caused people to speak a language that had certain genetic characteristics. These certain genetic characteristics then resulted in intensifying those genetic qualities so that they became the different races of the world, and the distinct differences that are obvious in the human race all over the world, even though they all came from one mother and father. It was genetic intensification as the result of their language unity that caused these differences. The result was that separate national entities were formed, and the races of the world developed from that.

The work on their world capital came to a screeching halt. Verse 8 says, "So, the Lord scattered them abroad from there upon the face of all the earth. And they ceased building the city. Therefore, the name of it is called Babel, because the Lord did there confound the languages." And that's what the word "babel" means. It means "confusion:" "And from there, the Lord scattered them abroad upon the face of the earth."

So, the descendants of Noah drifted off the plane of Shinar, and once more, people discovered that you do not resist the Council of God. As history has demonstrated, God brings bad government to nought. And they were consequently, completely destroyed.

Incidentally, you might like to look up Psalm 33:10 that tells you exactly what God does to the efforts of that government.

From these families of Noah (from his three sons) came all the nations of the world. From Shem came the Jewish and Arab nations; from Ham came the Egyptian, Indian, African and Asian nations; and, from Japheth came the Western nations of Europe and America. These separations, of course, exist to this day, which is a testimony to the divine plan of national separation. National divisions prevent Satan, as I said, from cutting off all access to the Word of God. Satan, therefore, keeps trying to create internationalism and world government to hinder mankind's access to the Word of God. But Satan's effort is going to fail, even though it's going to come very close to accomplishment in the tribulation era.

So, with that example (a prime example) of the violation of the divine institution of government, we may lay down this principle – that when government leaders step out of line from what God intends for them to do as government leaders, He stops them dead in their tracks. He'll cause them to drop down dead; He'll remove them from office; or, He'll take some other action that will stop the abuse of the divine institution of government. It always happens. It doesn't matter whether you're a Hitler or who you are. Sooner or later, you're brought to a screeching halt.

**We Must Obey the Government**

Now, in Romans 13:2, Paul says, "You have to obey government because it is this institution from God." Then he says, "And those who resist it are going to come into a certain problem area." The Greek word for "resist" is the word "anthistemi," and that means "to oppose" – those who are in rebellion against God. This is in that perfect tense in the Greek language, which tells us that this rebellion began in some attitudes you had in the past – a rebellion because you don't understand the divine institution of human government, and a rebellion because you do not understand the principles of Scripture. Something in your past creates an attitude of mind. So, you come down the line, and suddenly, at a point of time, you are in rebellion against government authorities. And when that happens, God says, "You're going to receive certain consequences to yourself."

**Judgment for Disobedience to the Government**

He describes the consequence as "judgment." This is the Greek word "krima." This word refers to a judicial penalty. You will receive a penalty from the Judge. The divine condemnation here for resisting the authority of magistrates is punishment from God through a human judge. Disobedience to constituted authority is a sin, and therefore it is punished by God.

**Paul, as a Roman Citizen, is Abused**

This is interesting that the apostle Paul is making such an emphasis upon obedience to constitute a government authority when he himself was abused by the Roman government that he is telling Christians to be subject to. Acts 16:37: "But Paul said unto them, 'They have beaten us openly, un-condemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privately? No verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out." The background of this is that the apostle Paul has been abused in the city of Philippi. The mob did not like his healing and the casting of the demon out of the girl that was their profit for their contact with fortunetelling – with contact with the demonic world. And the magistrates took the information of the mob, and they beat up Paul and Silas. You can't do that to a Roman citizen.

When the authorities found what they had done, they were scared stiff. And they went to Paul, and they sent their men to release them. Paul said, "Nothing doing. You have violated the divine institution of government. You have violated our civil rights. And now you are going to come and personally apologize, and personally release us from this prison, or we're not going." And, of course, they were very eager to do that, and they very quickly came and did just that.

**The American Revolution**

That does raise a question about obedience to government. Sooner or later, somebody is going to say to you, "Well, what about the American Revolution?" All of this comes to the bottom line – that the Bible forbids you to lead a revolution. The Bible forbids you to rise up in revolution against constituted authority. This is a realm that is only in the hand of God to move governments in, and move governments out; and, to move rulers in, and move rulers out. The only limitations that the Bible places upon our allegiance and loyalty to government is when the government wants us to do something that violates the Word of God; it wants us to do something that is immoral; or, it wants us to do something that the Bible contradicts, and that the Bible tells us we must not do. Then we cannot obey government. Then we go to civil disobedience.

However, the American Revolution (very often compared to the French Revolution) is an instructive area for us indeed. You should be aware of the fact that there was a specific status that the American colonies enjoyed relative to the mother country, England. The colonies, you remember, were all begun as privately owned enterprises based upon land grants from the king. Parliament had nothing to do with this. This whole new world had been found. Englishmen had been moving up into the North American area. And that was claimed for the king of England. A group of businessmen would come to the king. They would bring together some investors, and they would say, "We want to begin a colony for financial profit, and we request that we be granted a charter to have a territory of land that is exclusively ours, in which we may function to build this enterprise." The king would say, "OK, you have this piece; you have this piece; and, you have this piece. That's how they began. Parliament itself was originally indifferent toward these colonies. They didn't care whether they existed in the new world or not. And they didn't care what the king was doing in handing out parcels of land. The king himself let the owners conduct their own government structure. And they did that with very little interference.

**The Pilgrims**

When the pilgrims came over on the Mayflower, they intended to join the Jamestown colony, which already had a structure of government. When they were blown far north, and they ended up in Massachusetts, they had to write what we know today as the Mayflower Compact, which was a system of government that they set up on that ship. When they knew they were going to have to live by themselves, and they were going to be on their own, the first thing they did was establish a system of government. And, of course, it was based on biblical principles.

**The Colonies**

So, these colonies, from the first, were used to establishing a self-governing situation. When the colonies became prosperous, parliament and the king began to see them as a source of great economic benefit. Suddenly Parliament muscles in and starts passing laws to take charge of the colonies, and the property that belonged to these companies that had started these enterprises. And without consulting the colonists themselves, they began passing laws to bring economic benefit from the colonies. The American colonies then suddenly saw their civil rights as Englishmen being violated by the arbitrary laws of the king and parliament, because you couldn't do this to an Englishman. You could not deny him a voice in the laws which were being passed relative to him. This was laws being passed without representation.

**The Boston Tea Party**

So, the colonial legislatures immediately protested because they had been in charge of the colonial governments, and they in turn were ignored, and even threatened by the king and parliament. So, the colonists, as you know, decided to make some more bold expressions of their dissatisfaction with this undermining of their right to be consulted by their government. So, they had the Boston Tea Party. You should be aware of the fact that this was a great loss to the East India Company – to have those chests of tea thrown overboard in the Boston Harbor. But you should also be aware of the fact that the people who did it offered to reimburse the East India Company for the loss of the tea that was thrown into the bay. They only wanted to make the point that they would not let that tea land, with that taxation on it that they had not agreed to accept – that parliament had placed without their representatives having a voice in the passage of that law. Indeed, they made their point very effectively.

**Mercantilism**

What the American colonists we're trying to do was to be peaceful in resolving this conflict; to have their representatives consulted as English law required; and, not for England to be seeking its own benefits only. This was the area of mercantilism. Mercantilism was an economic system where you sent colonists, and you had colonies that would bring great wealth back to the mother country, and the colonies got nothing. It was a way of feeding wealth into the mother country. It was a mercantile system to make the mother country rich. England thought nothing at all about siphoning off the wealth of the colonies by force if necessary.

**The Continental Congress**

The Continental Congress of 1774 had no intention of even thinking about independence from England. They simply appealed, in that Congress, to George III for protection of their rights as Englishmen. And they intended to be loyal subjects of the king. One year later, in April of 1775, the British, however, forced the colonial resistance to heighten with the Boston massacre, and with the battles at Lexington and Concord. But even as late as July of 1775, that same year, Congress again sent a document to the king, and we call it historically the Olive Branch Petition. It was a final effort to seek reconciliation with the king, and to settle the issue of representation peacefully, and to have recognition for their civil rights so that they were not subject to this mercantile system of siphoning off their wealth at the whim of parliament and the king.

**The Declaration of Independence**

So, the king received this letter, and he responded to it by sending troops over to enforce his well upon the colonies. So, after ten years of effort to correct the abuse of England under the divine institution of government, the colonies were forced on July 4, 1776 to declare their independence.

I tell you all this so as to remind you that everything that was done by the leadership of the American colonies was done within the context of the divine institution of government seeking to bring correction. They were not acting in rebellion against the constituted authority of king and parliament. They were seeking redress of grievances where parliament and the king were themselves violating the laws of Englishmen. The men who governed the American colonies respected God. They believed in the Bible, and they honored Jesus Christ as Savior. Whether they had a personal faith in him or not, this is the way they looked upon Him and upon Scripture. And they were well aware that there was a God out there, and He was not just a force – He was a personal being.

They also respected the divine institution of government. They knew that they had been established in order to do the will of God. So, they were aware that they had to right before God, or they would bear the consequences once they were put in public office. Therefore, they did not come to revolution lightly, which indeed they did come to counter-revolution. But they did it as a result of seeking divine guidance, and considerable prayer, and thinking this thing over. They were not wild-eyed rebels.

Therefore, any Christians (any biblical Christian) in the colonies could rightfully participate in this resistance against the British crown, and against parliament. They would not have been in violation of Scripture, and those who did join (the Patriots) were not in violation of the doctrine of the divine institution of human government. That government had abused the institution. They then had a right to resist that abuse. It is very important that you understand that this was the nature of the American Revolution.

**The French Revolution**

Ten years later or so, on the other side of the channel, the French people finally get fed up with Louis XVI and his predecessors and the royalty, and they decide to rebel against the abuse and the harsh rule of their king. However, their action was totally different. There's no comparison between the two. The French were not claiming that their rights under French law were being violated. The French Revolution was 180 degrees different from the American Revolution. The French Revolution, from the very first, was humanistic. The leaders of the French Revolution said, "If there's a God out there, we don't care. We don't think that He's God. And we're not interested in what he has to say. We do not have any interest in the Bible." And very understandably, with the Roman Catholic Church domination, these people had ground for indignation against religious viewpoints, but they completely cut themselves off from all divine viewpoint. And they had no use whatsoever for the biblical doctrine of the divine institution of government.

What the French did, in fact, was followed a 180-degree different course from the American colonies. They made man his own God. And they did this because they decided that this would pursue maximum freedom. The French Revolution violated the divine institution of human government because they rejected the authority of God over governments and rulers. The American Revolution accepted the authority of God over government and rulers, and they worked within that context. The French threw that out and said, "God doesn't run us. We're going to have fraternity; we're going to have liberty; we're going to have freedom; and, we're going to have all of this. And we don't need God. We are going to be totally humanistic. Man is all that we need."

So, the French approach to the revolution was total lawlessness. Humanism was their religion. They had to have a religion. You have to have a religion to rally around. So, humanism was it. And the rioters in Paris expressed what was going on, and the attitude of the French in this revolution, when they took a prostitute; stripped her nude; put her on the altar of a church; and, then exalted and worshiped her as their goddess – the goddess of the French people. It was humanism to the core. The French lawless writing turned loose, as you know, the reign of terror for about a year. Men arbitrarily, having detached themselves from the restraint of God and His Word, slaughtered each other for what they believed were true human ideals. And the reign of terror was a nightmare such as none of us can appreciate unless we have lived through something like that, where every moment of the day your life was in danger. So, you could be accused, and your head chopped off with the guillotine.

Both the American and French revolutions indeed brought death, and this is how sometimes people try to equate the two. This would be like comparing a court of law executing a convicted murderer and a thief taking the life of his victim. The two are totally different. No biblical Christian, therefore, could have shared in the French Revolution. You could not have been a biblical Christian and been part of the French Revolution, because it violated the divine institution of government. Was Louis XVI an abusive king? He was indeed. Were the royalty living off the backs of the people? Indeed they were. Were the people ground into the dirt under great poverty and suffering? Indeed they were. All of this was indeed what their government was doing.

You may have been to Paris and visited the Palace of Versailles, and you've walked through those magnificent buildings, and seen where the King lived, and walked into his bedroom over which he had an image of the sun. He was known as the sun-god, and he was so superior; so wonderful; and, so supreme. And you may have walked through that magnificent ball room with the mirrors where the Treaty of Versailles was signed. And you may have seen all that luxury imposed upon people struggling to keep their families alive. Yes, it was a terrible condition, but they went about it wrong. They undermined the divine institution of government. They cut themselves off from the real God. And they cut themselves off from the guidance of the Word of God.

So, what was the result? Whereas the American colonists sought to resolve their legitimate grievances by biblical principles, the French did not. The Americans, consequently, following the revolution, found great personal freedom without chaos in their society. And they found great prosperity. The colonies just took off, and the hand of God was upon them. On the other side of the channel, the French very quickly fell under the dictatorship of Napoleon, who then proceeded to bring them suffering; who then stripped them of their freedom; who brought them death through multiple wars; and, ultimately led them to national defeat and subjugation on a field in Belgium at the Battle of Waterloo. It was a totally different consequence because of how they had operated under the divine institution of government. Human government is God's own creation, and it cannot be brushed aside for long, and it cannot be perverted very long by the arrogance of evil men. God will give you the consequence of that violation, and God will bring that institution back into line with His purposes.

So, when the apostle Paul tells us in Romans 13:2 that if you're going to resist government, you're resisting God Himself, and if you do, you're going to receive the consequence of judgment to yourself, he really means it. It has historically worked just like that. That is the way it is to this very day. Our job as Christians is to see to it that the government is in the hands of people who are biblical believers. Whether they are Christians or not, they are believers in biblical principles. Otherwise, we send them into that powerful position of governmental office at our own hazard, and threat to ourselves.

Now there's another problem. The American founders wrote a constitution. A man like John Adams, who is a theologian and a very dedicated Christian man, observed that the constitution that they had put together for the governing of this nation simply would not work unless there was something true about the character of the American people. Unless there was some characteristic of American culture, this constitution would be useless. And the result would be total personal destruction. We shall look at that next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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